

CURRENT AFFAIRS

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PART - II

QUESTION. 2

ANSWER

IRAN - PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Introduction

Iran and Pakistan relations have been cordial in many issues of the region. Pakistan engaged Iran in friendly ties not only between themselves but also between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Despite of normalcy in relation, there had been few soaring points. Cross-border terrorism is one of the few issues which has been taken up by both Iran and Pakistan. The Sistan - Balochistan border between the two countries has long been facing skirmishes and incidents of terrorism. The recent incident and tension between the two countries raised concerns among stakeholders on both sides. whereas benefiting

some countries. Therefore, it is necessary to take measures to de-escalate the situation.

Reason behind Iran's strike on Pakistan

Iran has been facing terrorism now and then. The terrorist elements in Sistan area has been continuously involved in attacks against Iran. One such incident amidst middle East conflict lead to the strike. Iran claimed an attack by terrorist band Jaish aladl. Iran is well cognizant about the conspiracies of various forces as it is one of the strong voices who support Palestine and is involved in disrupting Israel's actions against Hamas and Palestine. Now amidst this situation Iran cannot afford to engage in another conflict due to terrorist groups. Iran warned Pakistan to control the elements, yet despite of efforts made by Pakistan, these elements are operating from Sistan - Balochistan border. Hence, the entire crisis resulted in a conflicting situation.

Reason behind Pakistan's strike on Iran

Iran struck missile in Pakistan on June 16, 2024 in the Panjgur region. As a result Pakistan retaliated as it was an attack on the sovereignty. Pakistan had a strong reason to strike back in Iran. First, it was against the sovereign integrity of Pakistan to unilaterally

carry out action against terrorists without involving Pakistan. Secondly, it was seen in the global perspective, there are many elements which are involved in terrorist ~~again~~ attacks in Pakistan especially Balochistan. India being one of the countries which is constantly taking anti-Pakistan measures by engaging in Iran's terrorist elements. Kaul Bhushan Yadav is one such example who accepted the operations against Pakistan & while using Iranian soil. Eventually, Pakistan had to prevent any measure against its people and soil. Pakistan not only struck back but also called back her diplomat in order to record its grievances against Iran.

Beneficiaries of Iran-Pakistan tension

The conflicting situation between Iran and Pakistan has benefited various entities who want Iran to divert from Palestine-Israel conflict. Israel and her supporting allies along with its moral advocates are the major beneficiaries in this entire tension. Iran since long has been taking measures to inflict Israel aches in Palestine. Iran's unflinching support for Palestine is the main reason why Israel is against it. Iran's role in Middle East as a nuclear country pose huge influence on regional politics. Any damage to Iran will ^{certainly} divert its attention from all its activities in Middle East. Hence,

Pakistan and Iran tension has proved beneficial for such entities.

Ways of de-escalating the tension

Pakistan - Iran has previously been into many such situation where the tension rose. This time the incident is crucial to the relation of both countries because of the current situation in Palestine. Israel has been involved in attacks against Hamas in particular and Palestinian in general. It is imperative to de-escalate the tension in order to focus on the Palestine issue and also for future cordial relation between the two neighbouring countries.

Some measures that can be taken to de-escalate the tension are as following:

- 1- Diplomatic engagement must continue for effective dialogue.
2. Joint measures against terrorist entities in both countries
- 3- Defense coordination is important to see larger picture amidst Palestine issue.
4. Active engagement of head of government to take legislative measures where required.

Conclusion

Pakistan and Iran are neighbouring

Countries with a border in the least developed territories. It is quite suitable for the anti-state elements to carry out action not only against defense forces but also against local population. It is necessary to address the matter with cooperating with each other against curbing the menace of terrorism. Both countries need to realize the dynamics of the regional and global political and strategic interests. Therefore, it is imperative to take measures to de-escalate the tension in order to prevent any other element to take advantage of the conflict.

QUESTION. 3

ANSWER

OIC: AN OPPERTUNITY TO PLAY ROLE

Introduction

OIC is an organization of muslim countries whose goal was to address various issues face by the muslim world. Unfortunately, OIC did not achieve its inceptional goal. It failed to perform its role in major conflicts which required unity

and effective measures. There had been some core reason for falling short of action despite policies made. One of them has been Iran and Saudi relations. Now that Iran and Saudi Arabia re-approachment has taken place it is assumed that OIC can play an effective role to handle Palestine issue by engaging major power of the region especially Iran and Saudi Arabia. It is a little too early to predict the role and success because the basis on which the role of OIC is being emphasized is too not engaged in practical terms especially in terms of the re-approachment. There are not enough chances that OIC will play an effective role that was required to be played.

OIC: record in previous conflicts

OIC has been an ineffective organisation of muslim world with countries having conflicting interests especially the two major ones, Iran and Saudi Arabia. All the important members of OIC has always prioritized their own interest rather than helping or supporting muslim brother countries. Whether it be Kashmir issue or issue of Palestine or Afghanistan, OIC members expect for discussions have not done much. Any policy made here has not been effectively materialized.

OIC amidst conflicting situation

Palestine is one of the many issues long been unsuccessfully handled by member countries. Despite the claims of diplomatic and moral support for Palestinian people little has been practically done. Even now, the real role that was needed to be played is still missing. Although verbally the situations of Hamas - Israel conflict has been addressed but the policies could not be materialized. It is a little too early to expect successful role of OIC because the members of OIC are economically and strategically aligned with powers who support Israel. The members of OIC still have conflicting interests because no member is ~~actually~~ practically doing anything.

OIC after Iran Saudi rapprochement

Iran and Saudi Arabia has normalized its relation after the rapprochement was brokered by China. Despite the rapprochement there is yet any practical to be seen which would reflect alignment of their policies. Hence, despite rapprochement OIC will not engage in effective policies.

Opportunity to be grabbed is still uncertain

OIC is the representative of Muslim world. It has been hoped and believed that the member would unite in playing effective role. Despite of many opportunities

to play practical role, OIC could only do lip service. It is still uncertain whether OIC would grab the opportunity or not. It is unfortunate that some muslim countries are still independently engaged in Hamas-Israel conflict whereas OIC has not taken ~~and~~ much of serious and immediate action. Although it can be a huge opportunity for OIC to revive its influential role by addressing the issues faced today by muslim world especially the Palestine conflict.

Conclusion

OIC was established with hopes for a better and united efforts towards muslim prosperity. Unfortunately, the hopes could not become be fulfilled. It is yet another opportunity for OIC to play its role by engaging in meaningful discussion and materializing them. It is still a matter of time to see that role of OIC and to witness whether OIC grabs the opportunity or not.

QUESTION: 5

ANSWER

PAK - AFGHAN RELATIONS

Introduction

Pak - Afghan relations have seen a down turn since new Taliban government in Afghanistan. Pakistan has long been a victim of terrorism and insurgencies by Afghan Taliban along with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. Since 2022 the terrorist attacks have increased at a rapid pace killing many people. Pakistan has engaged Taliban government to address the issue & and prevent Taliban cross-border activities. Unfortunately, the relations between both countries are getting worse.

Afghan government failure to handle Taliban and cross-border terrorist

Afghan government has failed to handle terrorist elements and organisation from using its soil against Pakistan, which has been promised after they come in government. Instead of controlling its terrorist elements, some of the stakeholders in government are providing

same sanctuaries to Tehreek Taliban Pakistan and the more radical and anti-Pakistan group, ISIP. They Afghan government did not cooperate with Pakistan in curbing the menace rather the cross border infiltration were facilitated. This lead to severe measures by Pakistan.

Pakistan's policy to handle security situation

Pakistan government has been patiently yet scrupulously looking into the ethnic situation with various level of engagement. Despite of discussions and promises of Afghan government the terrorist activities continued to grow. Whether it be Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or Balochistan, the situation has been aggravating. In this regard, Pakistan renewed policy towards terrorists and decided not to further engage in any dialogue.

Moreover, Pakistan government provided evidence to Afghan government regarding use of Afghan soil. Unfortunately, Afghan government did not give positive response. As a result, Pakistan initially blocked trade routes. Even when it did not succeed, Pakistan government decided to send back Afghan refugees.

Afghan retournment

Pakistan has taken a serious mea-

are against the refugees who were not registered. Some of them were involved in anti-Pakistan actions. The refoulement was delayed on humanitarian basis providing another chance to Afghan refugees to register themselves. This was a clear warning to Afghan government amidst the increasing terrorist attacks.

Impact on Pak - Afghan relation

The relation between both countries initially got soured by sending back huge refugee population to poverty stricken Afghanistan. It has become normal since Afghan government has started discussion with regard to security situation. Many efforts have been made by Pakistan since it realizes the suffering of its brother country. The future relation would depend upon the Afghan policy towards terrorist elements and use of Afghan soil against Pakistan.

Conclusion

Pak - Afghan relation have long been dependent upon their security policy. Since both countries has faced and are still facing terrorism, the steps taken should be mutual. Without addressing security concerns the relation between both cannot fully normalize.

QUESTION : 8

ANSWER

SIFC AND CHANCES OF INVESTMENT

Introduction

SIFC, the new economic council is a joint initiative by ~~civil~~ military stakeholders. The special investment facilitation council was established 21 June, 2023. The council is seen as an economic game changer for Pakistan. It is expected to bring new foreign direct investment in Pakistan in order to revive the economy and prevent future challenges.

SIFC Program

SIFC Program is meticulously devised by the government and military officials. It is planned in phases with a target economic growth. For the first year it is expected to bring five billion economic increase. For the next three years the target is set to be hundred billion Rupees. The

target of 2030 is to add a trillion to the national economic structure. In order to achieve the set targets, both civil and military leadership is working efficiently.

Working of SIFC

SIFC is working on various levels. The structure is planned in a way which would ultimately ~~show~~ ^{show} effective results. The top role is ^{Open Committee} of the prime minister and the chief. After them there is a general committee. And then the third committee is working committee. The main role of all the committee is to improve businesses and facilitate them. It is also aimed to bring more investments from gulf countries and China.

Chances of investment

SIFC is a well organized and scrupulously planned institute with many important stakeholders. Army being directly involved in the council itself speaks for efficient and effective working of the institute.

The prospects of investment in future is quite encouraging. There are already many indicators which reflect the optimistic future of economic conditions of Pakistan.

some of these indicators include; commencement of second phase of CPEC, privatization of institutes and gulf countries interest in the economy and businesses in Pakistan.

All the indicators are speaking for itself. Yet it is a matter of time to see the results of the steps taken.

Conclusion

Pakistan has taken an initiative for the revival of its economic conditions and to improve businesses. Some steps are already taken in shape of SIFC and many more. The prospects of SIFC are optimistic with more chances of bringing foreign direct investment to Pakistan.